NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

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IN CHARGE OF

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PHYSIOLOGICAL ACTION OF TEA AS A BEVERAGE.—*The Practitioner* says: Lauder Brunton believes that tea, when properly prepared and taken in moderation, is both useful and agreeable. The avoidance of danger from impure water is not the only advantage to be gained by drinking vegetable infusions. Tea is a stimulant, and the use of stimulants is almost universal. The effect of tea, coffee, or cocoa seems to be threefold—on the circulation, on the spinal cord, and on the brain. When these substances reach the circulation, the flow of blood through the brain is increased, the brain cells are supplied with extra nutriment, and thought is quickened. It is probable that the brain cells themselves are affected by tea or coffee, so that communication between them becomes more rapid, more complete, and more permanent, than under ordinary circumstances. But it must not be forgotten that these substances tend to keep up mental action when it is not needed. Thus sleep, which restores the tired brain, is prevented. These beverages lessen the sense of fatigue and give a sense of wellbeing and of power, and actually add to the power of endurance. Tea is liable to abuse, and may then bring about most disastrous results. Tea may interfere with nutrition by lessening the feeling of hunger, by rendering food less digestible, and by interfering with the digestive power of the stomach. The different kinds of tea vary in the amount of tannin which they contain. The leaves should never be boiled or stewed. Boiling water should be poured on the leaves, and after standing for a few minutes should again be poured off. Taken with meat, it toughens the fiber. Hard water and water containing iron do not make good tea. A pinch of bicarbonate of soda, when hard water is used, improves the infusion. Tea, when taken in excesss, may produce the most serious nervous symptoms and facilitate, if it does not actually produce, mental degeneration.

A SOLUBLE BOBBIN FOR INTESTINAL ANASTOMOSIS.—*The New York Medical Journal,* quoting from *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal,* says: Cunningham and Baker have used a macaroni bobbin for intestinal anastomosis. Macaroni recommends itself because it is easily digested in the intestine, is cheap, and may be made sterile in its preparation. During the past four years it was employed experimentally with success, but no detailed observations recorded. A few months ago the writers, aided by Dr. W. E. Ladd, undertook a series of experiments to determine how long the bobbin remained undigested in the intestine. The macaroni used was a large size commercial macaroni, cut into cylinders three inches long by three-quarters of an inch in diameter and bobbins of special design. These were sterilized by dry heat. The experiments were performed upon cats, dogs, and sheep, and tend to show that in the macaroni bobbin we have a device which, besides facilitating intestinal suturing and holding the sutured ends in position until firmly adherent, serves as a conduit for the intestinal contents and at a period of time not under twelve hours or later than thirty-six hours, is digested and absorbed.

FONS ET ORIGO MALI MARIS.—*The New York Medical Journal,* quoting from a contemporary, says: Lund, after reviewing the various causes of sea sickness, concludes that: 1. The vomiting is not due to the unusual impression of vision, for it may occur on land, when the eyes are closed, and even to the blind. 2. It is not due to smell. Any unpleasant odor may cause vomiting, and may occur on land, and to any, including deaf mutes, who have sensitive nasal organs. 3. It is not due to momentary displacement of viscera, for it occurs in swinging, or in desending upon an elevator. The sensation is present whether the eyes are open or closed, but it does not occur in deaf mutes. 4. There is some mechanism in the auditory organ, perhaps the system of semicircular canals, which is directly affected by the oscillations of a vessel at sea, which acts as a stimulant to the vomiting centre. The sensation in the ears is synchronous with that in the epigastrium and may be due to change in the equilibrium of the endolymph in the semicircular canals. The treatment consists mainly in lowering the sensibility or conductivity of the different nerves or in benumbing the vomiting centre by narcotic drugs.

NEURASTHENIA AND AUTOINTOXICATION.—*The Medical Record,* quoting from an Italian contemporary, says: Archangele Mennella believes that the name neurasthenia is inexact and insufficient to express the conception of this neurosis. By many it is not admitted that neurasthenia can ever be congenital, as has been claimed by some, although an intolerance for the organic poisons can be inherited. Neurasthenia is not a well-defined disease, nor a morbid entity, but a syndrome. In general there is a toxemia, resulting from altered metabolism in neurasthenic cases, and this toxemia is of gastrointestinal origin. Nervous dyspepsia and gastric neurasthenia are the same condition under different names. There is no reason for seeking for an especial pathology. Neurotic symptoms are generally of chemical origin. Some reflex nervous symptoms result from the ingestion of certain food substances. The same may be said of cephalalgia. The neuroses and many psychoses are of autotoxic origin, and especially of gastrointestinal origin.

OPHTHALMIA OF THE NEWLY BORN.—Edgar, in the *Medical Record,* observes that: 1. Silver nitrate solution of 0.5 per cent. strength when applied to the gonococcus for fifteen seconds or longer is germicidal to the organism. Therefore, any solution of equal strength or stronger would fill the requirements as far as germicidal power is concerned. 2. The technique of administration consists simply of instilling the solution into the eye, requiring no after neutralization. 3. Solutions of silver nitrate of 0.5 per cent. and 1.0 per cent. strength do not produce a silver catarrh, even though no neutralizing solution is used afterward. Solutions of 2 per cent. nitrate produce a silver catarrh in about 25 per cent. of cases, whether or not a neutralizing solution is used. Therefore a 1.0 per cent. solution, being germicidal and at the same time producing no silver catarrh, is recommended.

IODINE IN CARBOLIC ACID POISONING.—Maberly, in *The Lancet,* as abstracted by *The New York Medical Journal,* reports three cases which demonstrate the great value of iodine as an antidote for carbolic acid. In two of the cases the iodine was given early before any general toxic symptoms developed, and acted most beneficially in relieving the burns of the mouth and throat. In the third case all the general toxic effects were fully developed, the abdomen being tympanitic and the stools dark and slimy; yet the patient recovered. In all the cases the iodine was given in the form of the tincture. The doses varied from a few drops up to a drachm. The chemical compound formed as a result of the reaction between iodine and phenol is apparently harmless. For practical purposes it is probable that equal parts of tincture of iodine and carbolic acid are complemental.

MEDICATION OF THE EYE IN CHILDREN.—B. F. Rhea, Junior, says in the *New York Medical Journal:* I should like to publish the following method of putting medicine in a child's eyes, which I recently learned and which I have never seen in the literature. After failing myself to put some medicine in a little boy's eye, which was paining him from a foreign body, the boy's mother told me that she could put the medicine in his eye. She did it in the following way: She put the boy's head on her lap with his back toward her, and told him to close his eye; she then poured the medicine on the inner canthus of the closed eye; when the child was told to open his eye the medicine ran in and anæsthetized the eye sufficiently for him to have the foreign body removed. I have done a good deal of eye practice, but this method of putting medicine in a child's eyes was new to me.

IODINE AND TYPHOID FEVER.—*The Medical Record,* quoting from *The British Medical Journal,* says: David Walsh states that he gives iodine and carbolic acid in all cases of typhoid fever that come under his care, with uniformly good results, a rapid general improvement, and with an absence of complications. His directions are to put one minim of pure carbolic acid and two minims of tincture of iodine into a tumbler of water, and let the patient drink as much of this both day and night as he wishes. It would be interesting to have the efficacy of this treatment investigated in a prolonged series of cases at some large metropolitan hospital or by a collective committee.

OPERATING TABLE WITH HEATING APPARATUS.—*The New York Medical Journal,* quoting from *Roussky Vratch,* says: Shalita devised an operating table provided with an electric thormophore, which keeps the plate of the table heated to about body heat or higher, during the entire operation. A set of four electric lamps with reflectors are also provided over the table, which keep the air over the patient warm. Surgeons who operate with this table must take care to stand straight and not to bend over the field of operation, otherwise they will feel the heat of the electric rays which are reflected from the lamps. Bending over the table while operating is a very bad habit, according to the author.

CANDY FACTORIES HEALTHFUL.—A London physician has lately expressed the opinion that both candy and sealing-wax factories are very healthful places in which to work. The candy girls, he says, are allowed to eat as much sugar as they like, with an excellent effect upon their health. *Experience shows that the sugar eater is proof against consumption, and it is impossible for her to become a drunkard.* The resin dust in the sealing-wax factories makes the air in them very stimulating, similar to that of a pine forest. It is true that the workers in these factories inevitably absorb with the dust particles of vermilion coloring, which is a virulent poison; but, according to the optimistic writer, even this has a good effect upon anemics.

Tan and Freckle Remover.—*The American Druggist and Pharmaceutical Record* has the following: The following solution, applied cautiously to the freckles with a tuft of absorbent cotton, will remove the offending spots. The application should be made after the face and arms have been washed and all traces of soap removed:

℞	Corrosive chloride of mercury	gr. vi
	Diluted hydrochloric acid	ʒi
	Water	℥iv
	Alcohol	℥ij
	Rose water	℥ij
	Glycerin	℥i

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Successful Treatment of Tetanus.—*La Tribune Médicale* reports the treatment of two cases of tetanus by means of injection of antitetanic serum, in addition to other measures, both of which recovered. In one case the pulse was one hundred and fifty and the respiration interrupted by distressing attacks of suffocation. Phenic acid was also used in this case. In the second case 170 c.c. of serum were used within thirteen days. Forty days elapsed before all traces of stiffness had disappeared.

Dusty Books.—*The Medical Record* says: Sir Lauder Brunton, in a recent popular article, states that he considers dust as one of the greatest enemies of advanced life, since it is the frequent cause of colds and respiratory diseases. He himself has found very frequently, on taking a dusty book from a library shelf, that it gave him a cold in the head. This has occurred so regularly that he now resorts to sponging the dusty edges with a solution of carbolic acid before disturbing the deposit.